



— State of —
North Dakota
Office of the Governor

John Hoeven
Governor

November 25, 2008

The Honorable Ed Schafer
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
15th & Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Schafer:

I am writing to seek your designation of 39 North Dakota counties as agriculture disaster areas based on crop losses incurred during 2008. The conditions that led to this request include compounding effects of excessively dry conditions in the western and central part of the state; ironically, coupled with late season rain and snow in the east that has challenged the harvesting of sugar beets, corn and soybeans. On August 12, 2008, I requested the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) to conduct damage assessments for all North Dakota counties due to dry conditions and preliminary crop loss reports. Specifically, County Emergency Boards were asked to assess losses in crop production and quality due to a multitude of perils, including but not limited to, frost damage, drought and general lack of timely precipitation, high temperatures, insect and disease pressure, heavy rainfall, overland flooding, hail and high winds.

Based on the information contained in the enclosed Damage Assessment Reports (DARs), prepared by all North Dakota County Emergency Boards and a unanimous recommendation by the North Dakota USDA State Emergency Board, I formally request a Secretarial Disaster Designation for 39 North Dakota counties currently meeting USDA criteria. The Secretarial Disaster Designation will ensure that appropriate help, including disaster assistance now authorized by the Farm Bill, USDA emergency loan and debt restructuring programs for eligible producers, and SBA assistance may be available to agricultural-related businesses which suffered a loss.

Crop losses of 30 percent or greater countywide were found in 34 counties including Adams, Billings, Bottineau, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Cass, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McHenry,

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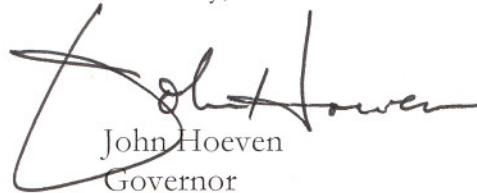
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McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Oliver, Pierce, Renville, Rolette, Sargent, Sheridan, Slope, Stark, Towner, Ward, Wells and Williams Counties. The reports also indicate that Benson, Eddy, Foster, Grand Forks and Pembina Counties meet criteria of having one or more individual producers suffered a crop loss and is unable to obtain credit from sources other than FSA. The 14 remaining counties are contiguous to those qualifying counties named above.

I request that you act favorably upon the North Dakota USDA State Emergency Board recommendation and my request for a Secretarial Disaster Declaration for 39 counties in North Dakota to help producers in the impacted area.

I appreciate your attention to this request to ensure implementation of assistance programs in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
Governor

38:47:56
Enclosure

C: Honorable Byron Dorgan, U.S. Senate
Honorable Kent Conrad, U.S. Senate
Honorable Earl Pomeroy, U.S. House of Representatives
Gary J. Nelson, State Executive Director, N.D. Farm Service Agency, USDA
Roger Johnson, North Dakota Commissioner of Agriculture
Greg Wilz, Director, North Dakota Division of Homeland Security